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Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Fifty-sixth session (6-24 March 2000)

Fifty-seventh session (31 July-25 August 2000)

Addendum

Programme budget implications of decision 1 (56)

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

A. Requests contained in decision 1 (56)

1. At its fifty-sixth session, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, by its decision 1 (56), decided, in order to examine with priority the reports of the States parties which encounter difficulties in attending meetings of the Committee in Geneva, to request that its fifty-eighth session be held at United Nations Headquarters from 8 to 26 January 2001. It also requested the General Assembly to take appropriate measures to implement the decision.

2. The Committee usually holds two three-week sessions a year in Geneva. However, in its decision 1 (56) the Committee recalls that, in accordance with article 10, paragraph 4, of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Committee's sessions should normally be held at United Nations Headquarters. The Committee further justifies its decision by the fact that some States parties, in particular developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, maintain diplomatic missions in New York but not in Geneva and that some of these States encounter financial and other difficulties in attending meetings in Geneva.

3. In connection with the Committee's decision it will be recalled that in 1999, similarly, the Committee decided, in decision 4 (55), to hold its fifty-eighth session in March 2001 at United Nations Headquarters, and requested the General Assembly to take appropriate measures to implement that decision. In its decision 54/433, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Committee (A/54/18)[1] and, in the light of the statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule

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153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly (A/54/18/Add.1), decided to refer back to the Committee, for further consideration, its decision 4 (55). At that time, however, it was understood that, owing to the anticipated shortage of suitable conference facilities and services in New York, the exact timing of the fifty-eighth session of the Committee would be subject to further consultations between the Committee and the Secretariat. Those consultations resulted in the understanding that the dates 8 to 26 January would be available for holding the fifty-eighth session of the Committee in New York, subject to approval by the General Assembly. Decision 1 (56) was adopted after the Committee was informed of this understanding.

B. Additional requirements

4. Resources for the meetings of the Committee in Geneva for the biennium 2000-2001 are included under section 22, Human rights, and section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services, of the programme budget for the biennium.[2]

5. The requirements for holding the fifty-eighth session of the Committee in New York as compared with Geneva are as follows:

Section 22, Human Rights	*New York*	*Geneva*
	(United States dollars)	
Travel of staff		
Four staff members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to service the session at United Nations Headquarters (travel, daily subsistence and terminal expenses)	36 000	
Travel of representatives		
18 members of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (travel, daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses)	214 700	164 400
Total	**250 700**	**164 400**

6. The additional requirements for travel and daily subsistence allowance entailed by holding the fifty-eighth session of the Committee in New York would amount to $86,300.

C. Potential for absorption

7. No provision has been made in the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 under section 22 to cover the additional requirements of $86,300 relating to the holding of a session of the Committee in New York instead of Geneva.

D. Contingency fund

8. It will be recalled that, under the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Under this procedure, if additional expenditures are proposed that exceed the resources available from the contingency fund, the activities concerned can be implemented only through redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or modification of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities will have to be deferred to a later biennium.

9. No activities could be identified, at this stage, for termination, deferral, curtailment or modification under section 22, Human rights, of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 to accommodate the additional requirements of $86,300 referred to above.

10. Unless the General Assembly decides otherwise, the implementation of decision 1 (56) of the Committee would entail, therefore, an additional provision of $86,300 over and above the resources included in section 22, Human rights, of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. The provision would represent a charge against the contingency fund and as such would require a related additional appropriation.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 18.*

[2] Ibid., *Supplement No. 6* (A/54/6/Rev.1).